

Statement of Rep. Anna G. Eshoo
Energy & Commerce Full Committee Markup of
H.R. 1582, H.R. 1900, H.R. 83, H.R. 2094, H.R. 698, H.R. 2052
July 16, 2013

Mr. Chairman, I'm very concerned about the first two bills on our docket for today, the *Energy Consumers Relief Act* and the *Natural Gas Pipeline Permitting Reform Act*. I fear that these bills would put the public and environment at risk, one by endlessly delaying rules that protect the environment and human health, and the other by needlessly rushing a process designed to achieve the same goal. The irony is not lost on me that we would consider these two bills on the same day: apparently, our federal agencies are at once moving far too quickly and far too slowly on energy-related rules and permitting.

H.R. 1582, the *Energy Consumers Relief Act* appears to be a response to the President's new wave of executive actions to stem climate change. I welcome the President's plan to protect future generations, and I regret the fact that this body continues to keep its head squarely in the sand on the issue of climate change. This Committee has failed to hold a single hearing on climate change and has steadfastly refused to move any legislation that would address this existential threat. Even worse, when the President seeks to take matters into his own hands under his clear legal authority to do so, our Committee considers bills like H.R. 1582, that would stop the Administration in its tracks. H.R. 1582 is clearly designed to delay major EPA rules indefinitely, as it contains no deadlines for its various requirements and contains several undefined terms that are ripe for litigation. Among other things, this bill will ensure that our nation's dirtiest power plants continue to spew carbon into the atmosphere indefinitely and further exacerbate global warming.

H.R. 1900, the *Natural Gas Pipeline Permitting Reform Act*, is also concerning for several reasons. While I certainly support measures to expedite federal agency actions across the board, I do not believe imposing arbitrary deadlines on FERC and other permitting agencies will achieve the desired goals here. I foresee two possible outcomes if H.R. 1900 becomes law and imposes its 1-year and 90-day deadlines. FERC and the permitting agencies will either be forced to deny pipeline applications because they cannot meet the deadlines, or they will rush the approval process and fail to ensure that the environment and public health are properly protected. Either way, the American people and our environment will pay the price.

I know all too well the price of failing to ensure the safety and integrity of our pipelines. In September, 2010, in my home county, a natural gas pipeline explosion in San Bruno, California killed eight people and destroyed dozens of homes. I believe H.R. 1900, with its rushed permitting process and automatic rubber stamp if an agency misses the deadline, will put more people at risk of a catastrophic explosion like the one in San Bruno.

I'm pleased we're considering the *HIV Organ Policy Equity (HOPE) Act* which would allow our advances in science and research over the past three decades better inform how we treat those HIV positive patients who need an organ transplant.

I'm also pleased we're considering the *School Access to Emergency Epinephrine Act* which is designed to ensure a safe and healthy environment for children who may have a potentially deadly allergic reaction while at school.